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APRIL 1984

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

Alaska Department of Labor Bill Sheffield, Governor, State of Alaska

1 Alaska Wage Rates

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ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

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The following notes pertain to Nonagricultural Wage and Salary Employment Tables:

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark Date March 1983.

P/ Denotes preliminary estimates.

R/ Denotes revised estimates.

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ALASKA WAGE RATES

By John Van Houten

Occupational wage rates are an important consideration in business and personal planning. Employers want comparisons between their wage schedules and the prevailing wage rates. Similarly, job seekers and persons planning careers are interested in wage rate comparisons among various occupations and different geographical areas. Because of these and other reasons, requests for wage rates are among the most frequently asked for information from Research and Analysis.

Research and Analysis has two major sources from which to answer these requests: the results of an annual entry-level wage rate survey and compilations of wage rates offered by employers who have placed job orders at the 19 local Job Service offices throughout Alaska. The 1983 entry-level wage survey comprised 197 occupations and included responses from more than 1,200 employers throughout Alaska. The data are compiled on a statewide basis and for six geographic-economic regions and printed in the publication *1983 Wage Rates for Selected Occupations.* Copies of this report are available from the Department of Labor, Research & Analysis.

The second source, Job Service job-order wage offerings, includes some 1,200 occupations defined in the 4th edition of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* (DOT). More than 54,000 job orders were placed during 1983. Table 1 is an Alaska statewide listing of occupations which had 25 or more job orders. Occupations with less than 25 job orders were placed in the "all other categories." Openings and the average wage offered are listed in the tables. The openings indicated are job orders placed with Job Service offices; they were not all necessarily filled. Tables 2 and 3 are listings of job orders placed with the Anchorage and Fairbanks offices, respectively, and include occupations for which 15 or more orders were placed during 1983.

Persons interested in more information than provided here should call Research and Analysis. Wage rates are available for all occupations for which job orders were placed and local information is available for each of the 19 Job Service offices listed in Table 4.

Table 1
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Statewide
1983

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
MANAGERS AND OFFICERS		
CAPTAIN, WATER VESSEL	25	$ 22.30
MANAGER, EATING OR DRINKING ESTABLISHMENT	33	6.87
ALL OTHER MANAGERS	331	11.42
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL		
ACCOUNTANTS AND AUDITORS	51	14.82
AIRPLANE PILOT	28	22.35
BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE TECHNICIAN	25	5.67
CASEWORKER	72	9.68
CIVIL ENGINEER	27	14.76
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER	25	10.97
DENTAL ASSISTANT	33	8.71
DRAFTER	113	9.71
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC TECHNICIANS	44	11.05
GROUP RECREATION WORKER	81	5.97
NURSE, LICENSED PRACTICAL	29	8.97
NURSE, PROFESSIONAL	71	11.27
RADIO OPERATOR	35	6.77
RADIOLOGIC TECHNICIAN	32	7.87
SURVEYOR	54	13.47
TRAVEL AGENT OR TRAVEL ACCOMMODATIONS APPRAISER	41	8.39
VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL COUNSELOR	82	10.72
ALL OTHER MEDICAL AND DENTAL TECHNOLOGISTS/TECHNICIANS	40	11.76
ALL OTHER TEACHERS	87	10.54
ALL OTHER TECHNICIANS	43	7.97
ALL OTHER PROFESSIONAL WORKERS	423	9.93
SERVICES		
BAKER, BREAD/PASTRY	149	6.39
BARTENDER	195	6.97
BELLHOP/BAGGAGE PORTER/DOORKEEPER/ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT	43	5.29
BUTCHER OR MEAT CUTTER	43	7.81
CHILD CARE ATTENDANT	481	4.13
CHILD CARE WORKER	56	6.00
COOK, INSTITUTION OR CAFETERIA	227	8.22
COOK, RESTAURANT	581	6.56
COOK, SHORT ORDER/SPECIALTY FAST FOODS	582	5.22
CORRECTION OFFICER OR JAILER	56	12.67
COUNTER ATTENDANT, LUNCHROOM, COFFEE SHOP, OR CAFETERIA	846	4.45
DINING ROOM/CAFETERIA ATTENDANT OR BARTENDER HELPER	217	4.48
FIRE FIGHTER	348	7.99
FOREST CONSERVATION WORKER	145	7.51
GAME OPERATORS/RIDE OPERATORS/CONCESSION WORKERS	26	8.70
GUARDS AND DOORKEEPERS	139	6.55

Table 1
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Statewide
1985
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
HOST/HOSTESS, RESTAURANT, LOUNGE, OR COFFEE SHOP	96	5.26
HOUSE CLEANER	166	5.28
HOUSEKEEPER	37	5.83
KITCHEN HELPER	1,112	5.15
MAID	353	5.42
NURSE AIDE OR ORDERLY	32	6.90
PANTRY/SANDWICH/COFFEE MAKER	172	5.31
SECURITY CHECKER	52	5.28
SUPERVISOR, NONWORKING—SERVICE ONLY	65	9.25
WAITER/WAITRESS	1,273	4.32
ALL OTHER JANITORS, PORTERS, AND CLEANERS	1,001	5.91
ALL OTHER FOOD SERVICE WORKERS	153	4.14
ALL OTHER SERVICE WORKERS	1,601	6.17
ALTERATION TAILOR	29	5.91
MAINTENANCE AND PRODUCTION		
AUTOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER	28	9.44
BAGGER	238	4.09
BINDERY WORKER, ASSEMBLY	25	4.26
BRICKLAYER	53	14.40
BUS DRIVER, SCHOOL	57	10.66
CANNERY WORKER	10,583	5.46
CARPENTER	1,318	11.43
CEMENT MASON	87	12.73
CHOKER SETTER, LUMBER	47	13.11
CLEANER, VEHICLE	183	5.03
DELIVERY OR ROUTE WORKER	168	5.32
ELECTRICIAN HELPER	32	7.72
ELECTRICIAN	244	16.33
FALLER OR BUCKER	111	10.92
GARDENERS AND GROUNDSKEEPERS	604	5.22
GLAZIER	26	17.90
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	355	15.41
INDUSTRIAL TRUCK OPERATOR	42	9.54
LINE SERVICE ATTENDANT	33	5.15
MAINTENANCE REPAIRER, GENERAL UTILITY	239	7.53
MECHANIC, AIRCRAFT	62	12.92
MECHANIC, AUTOMOTIVE	281	10.26
MECHANIC, DIESEL	65	12.42
MECHANIC, ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT	111	15.24
MECHANIC, MAINTENANCE	28	10.84
MECHANIC, REFRIGERATION OR AIR CONDITIONING	25	13.43
ORDINARY SEAMAN	27	17.14
PAINTER, MAINTENANCE	383	9.01
PAINTER, PRODUCTION	51	8.89
PARKING LOT ATTENDANT	120	4.88
PLUMBER OR PIPEFITTER	267	15.23
PRINT DEVELOPER, MACHINE	26	5.53

ALASKA
HOURS AND EARNINGS
FOR
SELECTED INDUSTRIES 1/ 2/

	Average Hourly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Weekly Earnings		
	p/ 12/83	r/ 11/83	12/82	p/ 12/83	r/ 11/83	12/82	p/ 12/83	r/ 11/83	12/82
Mining	$22.10	$24.58	$21.49	46.7	49.2	45.2	$1032.07	$1209.34	$971.35
Contract Construction 3/	23.89	23.65	22.78	35.3	39.5	40.6	843.32	934.18	924.87
Manufacturing	15.12	14.97	14.04	31.9	29.1	32.7	482.33	435.63	459.11
Food & Kindred Products	8.64	9.17	8.72	18.3	17.4	23.7	158.11	159.56	206.66
Lumber & Paper Products	18.61	18.01	16.90	40.4	39.3	39.9	751.84	707.79	674.31
Trans. Comm. & Util.	16.06	15.72	15.05	36.5	37.3	36.7	586.19	586.36	552.34
Trade	10.13	10.26	9.61	35.3	34.5	35.4	357.59	353.97	340.19
Wholesale	12.27	12.17	11.14	37.7	36.8	37.6	462.58	447.86	418.86
Retail	9.34	9.52	9.02	34.5	33.7	34.6	322.23	320.82	312.09
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	—	—	—	—	—	—	340.30	339.79	361.48

1/ Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

2/ Excludes eating and drinking establishments

3/ Due to technical revision in construction sample, 1982 estimates are not strictly comparable to previous years data.

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS SERIES: Averages are based on data for full and part time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.

Table 1
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Statewide
1985
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
PRODUCTION PACKAGER, HAND OR MACHINE	44	6.09
ROOFER	68	13.99
SERVICE STATION/FUEL PUMP ATTENDANT OR LUBRICATOR	328	4.65
SHEET METAL WORKER	57	13.01
STOCK CLERK, SALES FLOOR	91	5.52
SUPERVISOR, NONWORKING	119	16.44
SURVEYOR HELPER	68	8.27
TIRE FABRICATOR OR REPAIRER	88	6.34
TRUCK DRIVER, HEAVY	336	9.79
WELDER OR FLAMECUTTER	74	14.30
ALL OTHER ASSEMBLERS	75	7.46
ALL OTHER HELPERS, SKILLED TRADES	115	6.28
ALL OTHER LABORERS AND UNSKILLED WORKERS	9668	6.75
ALL OTHER MECHANICS AND REPAIRERS	172	9.03
ALL OTHER OPERATIVES AND SEMISKILLED WORKERS	581	9.57
ALL OTHER SKILLED CRAFT AND KINDRED WORKERS	325	12.52
CLERICAL		
ACCOUNTING CLERK	80	7.14
BOOKKEEPER, HAND	447	7.92
CAR RENTAL CLERK	71	4.98
CASHIER	503	6.81
COLLECTOR	33	8.00
COMPUTER OPERATOR	29	13.95
COUNTER CLERK	34	4.40
CREDIT CLERK	59	9.15
DESK CLERK	160	5.82
FILE CLERK	113	5.39
GENERAL OFFICE CLERK	1232	6.60
KEYPUNCH OPERATOR	56	7.77
LIBRARY ASSISTANT	29	7.30
MAIL CLERK	35	6.61
MESSENGER	286	5.33
ORDER CLERK	39	5.80
PAYROLL OR TIMEKEEPING CLERK	71	8.41
PRODUCTION CLERK OR COORDINATOR	44	7.50
PROOF MACHINE OPERATOR	35	5.81
RECEPTIONIST	581	6.38
SECRETARY	685	8.69
SHIPPING OR RECEIVING CLERK	45	6.59
STOCK CLERK, STOCKROOM, WAREHOUSE, OR STORAGE YARD	423	5.63
SURVEY WORKER	131	6.89
SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR	59	5.75
TEACHER AIDE OR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	63	8.29
TELLER	153	8.45
TRANSPORTATION AGENT	31	7.49

Table 1
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Statewide
1983
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
TRAVEL CLERK	27	6.37
TYPIST	665	7.94
ALL OTHER OFFICE MACHINE OPERATORS	310	7.29
ALL OTHER OFFICE CLERICAL WORKERS	344	7.79
ALL OTHER PLANT CLERICAL WORKERS	121	8.27
SALES		
DEMONSTRATOR	62	5.58
SALES AGENT ASSOCIATE REPRESENTATIVE, INSURANCE	25	8.62
SALES CLERK	864	5.17
ALL OTHER SALES AGENTS ASSOCIATES REPRESENTATIVES	605	6.25
ALL OTHER SALES WORKERS	137	5.10
TOTAL JOB OPENINGS	18,916	

Table 2
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Anchorage
1983

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
MANAGERS AND OFFICERS		
ALL MANAGERS	143	$11.78
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL		
CASEWORKER	26	9.88
DRAFTER	79	9.87
ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC TECHNICIANS	25	8.17
GROUP RECREATION WORKER	28	6.81
NURSE, PROFESSIONAL	29	10.61
SURVEYOR	16	15.00
TEACHER, SECONDARY SCHOOL	17	9.54
VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL COUNSELOR	19	13.95
ALL OTHER ENGINEERS	17	15.32
ALL OTHER MEDICAL AND DENTAL TECHNOLOGISTS/TECHNICIANS	16	13.02
ALL OTHER TEACHERS	17	9.97
ALL OTHER TECHNICIANS	49	9.66
ALL OTHER PROFESSIONAL WORKERS	150	8.90
SERVICES		
BAKER, BREAD/PASTRY	22	5.77
BARTENDER	70	7.77
BELLHOP/BAGGAGE PORTER/DOORKEEPER/ROOM SERVICE ATTENDANT	18	5.12
BUTCHER OR MEAT CUTTER	35	7.86
CHILD CARE ATTENDANT	110	4.22
CHILD CARE WORKER	15	5.95
COOK, INSTITUTION OR CAFETERIA	99	7.79
COOK, SHORT ORDER/SPECIALTY FAST FOODS	355	4.51
COOK, RESTAURANT	312	6.78
COUNTER ATTENDANT, LUNCHROOM, COFFEE SHOP, OR CAFETERIA	135	4.91
DINING ROOM/CAFETERIA ATTENDANT OR BARTENDER HELPER	138	4.58
FIRE FIGHTER	63	7.97
GUARDS AND DOORKEEPERS	94	5.98
HOST/HOSTESS, RESTAURANT, LOUNGE, OR COFFEE SHOP	35	5.83
HOUSE CLEANER	17	5.07
KITCHEN HELPER	385	4.83
MAID	145	5.30
PANTRY/SANDWICH/COFFEE MAKER	102	5.49
PARKING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	17	5.04
SECURITY CHECKER	47	4.97
SUPERVISOR, NONWORKING—SERVICE ONLY	57	7.34
WAITER/WAITRESS	432	4.29
ALL OTHER JANITORS, PORTERS, AND CLEANERS	532	5.46
ALL OTHER SERVICE WORKERS	108	5.65
MAINTENANCE AND PRODUCTION		
ASPHALT RAKER	2,363	6.68

Table 2
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Anchorage
1985
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
AUTOMOTIVE BODY REPAIRER	24	9.31
BRICKLAYER	33	12.36
CANNERY WORKER	1,837	5.13
CARPENTER	749	10.59
CEMENT MASON	57	10.36
CLEANER, VEHICLE	97	5.02
DELIVERY OR ROUTE WORKER	89	5.21
DENTAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN	16	7.39
DRY WALL APPLICATOR	29	9.79
ELECTRICIAN	113	13.20
ELECTRICIAN HELPER	24	6.33
FALLER OR BUCKER	50	8.52
GARDENERS AND GROUNDSKEEPERS	200	6.41
GASOLINE ENGINE OR MOWER REPAIRER	18	7.42
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	174	13.37
INDUSTRIAL TRUCK OPERATOR	35	8.41
LINE SERVICE ATTENDANT	18	4.78
MAINTENANCE REPAIRER, GENERAL UTILITY	127	7.58
MECHANIC, AIRCRAFT	33	11.78
MECHANIC, AUTOMOTIVE	157	10.04
MECHANIC, DIESEL	32	11.91
MECHANIC, ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT	41	14.65
MECHANIC, MAINTENANCE	16	10.67
MECHANIC, REFRIGERATION AIR CONDITIONING	23	12.20
OPTICIAN, DISPENSING OPTICAL MECHANIC	21	6.26
PAINTER, MAINTENANCE	245	9.42
PARKING LOT ATTENDANT	77	4.92
PLUMBER OR PIPEFITTER	159	14.26
PRINT DEVELOPER, MACHINE	24	5.50
ROOFER	16	10.06
RUG CLEANER, HAND	19	5.47
SERVICE STATION FUEL PUMP ATTENDANT LUBRICATOR	192	4.52
SHEET METAL WORKER	32	11.19
SUPERVISOR, NONWORKING	44	16.74
TIRE FABRICATOR REPAIRER	67	6.41
TRUCK DRIVER, HEAVY	104	11.29
TRUCK DRIVER, LIGHT	119	5.97
WELDER OR FLAMECUTTER	43	13.08
ALL OTHER ASSEMBLERS	42	7.66
ALL OTHER HELPERS, SKILLED TRADES	58	6.68
ALL OTHER LABORERS AND UNSKILLED WORKERS	1,773	6.20
ALL OTHER MECHANICS AND REPAIRERS	68	8.28
ALL OTHER OPERATIVES AND SEMISKILLED WORKERS	185	7.91
ALL OTHER SKILLED CRAFT AND KINDRED WORKERS	144	9.51
CLERICAL		
ACCOUNTING CLERK	207	6.69

Table 2
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Anchorage
1983
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
BOOKKEEPER, HAND	215	8.27
CAR RENTAL CLERK	21	5.01
CASHIER	160	5.20
COLLECTOR	22	6.77
COMPUTER OPERATOR	17	8.22
CREDIT CLERK	53	6.98
DESK CLERK	38	6.00
FILE CLERK	51	5.60
GENERAL OFFICE CLERK	493	6.05
KEYPUNCH OPERATOR	29	7.86
MAIL CLERK	24	6.07
MESSENGER	143	5.63
ORDER CLERK	27	5.90
PAYROLL OR TIMEKEEPING CLERK	36	7.65
PROOF MACHINE OPERATOR	21	5.69
RATER	17	6.28
RECEPTIONIST	288	6.08
SECRETARY	307	8.31
SHIPPING OR RECEIVING CLERK	28	5.72
STOCK CLERK, STOCKROOM, WAREHOUSE, OR STORAGE YARD	88	5.31
SURVEY WORKER	65	6.13
SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR	44	6.09
TELLER	58	6.54
TYPIST	304	7.45
ALL OTHER OFFICE MACHINE OPERATORS	21	6.84
ALL OTHER OFFICE CLERICAL WORKERS	163	6.54
ALL OTHER PLANT CLERICAL WORKERS	70	6.68
SALES		
SALES CLERK	383	5.02
ALL OTHER SALES AGENTS/ASSOCIATES/ REPRESENTATIVES	365	6.22
ALL OTHER SALES WORKERS	79	4.74
TOTAL JOB OPENINGS	17,538	

Table 3
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Fairbanks
1983

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
MANAGERS AND OFFICERS		
MANAGER, EATING/DRINKING ESTABLISHMENT	20	$6.96
ALL OTHER MANAGERS	36	11.41
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL		
DRAFTER	17	10.14
RADIO OPERATOR	33	6.58
VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL COUNSELOR	15	9.43
ALL OTHER MEDICAL AND DENTAL TECHNOLOGISTS/TECHNICIANS	33	9.29
ALL OTHER TEACHERS	20	9.59
ALL OTHER TECHNICIANS	18	9.92
ALL OTHER PROFESSIONAL WORKERS	99	9.57
SERVICES		
BARTENDER	28	6.25
CHILD CARE ATTENDANT	81	4.66
COOK, SHORT ORDER/SPECIALTY FAST FOODS	85	5.54
COOK, RESTAURANT	115	6.92
COUNTER ATTENDANT, LUNCHROOM, COFFEE SHOP, OR CAFETERIA	36	5.15
FIRE FIGHTER	316	8.08
HOUSE CLEANER	25	5.19
HOST/HOSTESS, RESTAURANT, LOUNGE, OR COFFEE SHOP	33	4.60
KITCHEN HELPER	165	4.97
MAID	22	4.99
WAITER/WAITRESS	239	4.10
ALL OTHER FOOD SERVICE WORKERS	16	4.92
ALL OTHER JANITORS, PORTERS, AND CLEANERS	127	6.08
ALL OTHER SERVICE WORKERS	73	7.89
MAINTENANCE AND PRODUCTION		
ASPHALT RAKER	17	5.64
BUS DRIVER	21	7.96
CARPENTER	157	10.92
DELIVERY OR ROUTE WORKER	44	4.97
HEAVY EQUIPMENT OPERATOR	42	12.78
MAINTENANCE REPAIRER, GENERAL UTILITY	38	7.75
MECHANIC, AUTOMOTIVE	54	10.58
MECHANIC, DIESEL	17	13.16
MECHANIC, ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT	30	14.84
ORDER FILLER	283	8.20
PAINTER, MAINTENANCE	26	10.55
PARKING LOT ATTENDANT	19	4.86
PLUMBER/PIPEFITTER HELPER	28	11.76
SERVICE STATION/FUEL PUMP ATTENDANT/LUBRICATOR	26	4.98
STOCK CLERK, SALES FLOOR	40	5.32
TREE TRIMMER	20	6.77
TRUCK DRIVER, HEAVY	26	8.81

Table 3
Average Wage Rates of Job Orders Received
Fairbanks
1983
(Continued)

Occupation	No. of Openings	Mean Wage
ALL OTHER ASSEMBLERS	31	5.92
ALL OTHER HELPERS, SKILLED TRADES	25	7.41
ALL OTHER MECHANICS AND REPAIRERS	38	8.57
ALL OTHER SKILLED CRAFT AND KINDRED WORKERS	85	9.57
ALL OTHER OPERATORS AND SEMISKILLED WORKERS	101	8.89
ALL OTHER LABORERS AND UNSKILLED WORKERS	1,029	6.76
CLERICAL		
BOOKKEEPER, HAND	85	7.49
CASHIER	91	5.87
GENERAL OFFICE CLERK	241	7.32
PAYROLL OR TIMEKEEPING CLERK	18	7.46
PRODUCTION CLERK OR COORDINATOR	27	7.96
RECEPTIONIST	64	6.20
SECRETARY	72	8.16
STOCK CLERK, STOCKROOM, WAREHOUSE, OR STORAGE YARD	58	5.73
URVEY WORKER	16	4.36
TELLER	19	21.71
TYPIST	80	7.30
ALL OTHER OFFICE MACHINE OPERATORS	53	7.36
ALL OTHER OFFICE CLERICAL WORKERS	152	6.24
ALL OTHER PLANT CLERICAL WORKERS	13	8.10
SALES		
SALES CLERK	124	5.92
ALL OTHER SALES AGENTS/ASSOCIATES/ REPRESENTATIVES	139	6.75
ALL OTHER SALES WORKERS	14	5.42
TOTAL JOB OPENINGS	5,115	

Table 4
Alaska Job Service Offices

Anchorage Job Service
3301 Eagle Street-Suites 101-106
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
(907) 264-2631

Barrow Job Service
(Stevenson Street)
Box 525
Barrow, Alaska 99723
(907) 852-4500

Bethel Job Service
Box 187
Bethel, Alaska 99559
(907) 543-2210

Dillingham Job Service
Box 261
Dillingham, Alaska 99576
(907) 842-5579

Fairbanks Employment Center
(675 Seventh Avenue, Station D)
Pouch 1010
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707
(907) 452-1501

Glennallen Job Service
Box 145
Glennallen, Alaska 99588
(907) 822-3350

Homer Job Service
Box 2085
Homer, Alaska 99603
(907) 235-7791

Juneau Employment Center
212 Ferry Way
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 586-1150

Kenai Employment Center
(110 Trading Bay Road)
Drawer 1091
Kenai, Alaska 99611
(907) 283-4304

Ketchikan Employment Center
(326 Dock Street)
Box 7878
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901
(907) 225-3181

Kodiak Employment Center
(309 Center Street)
Box 1546
Kodiak, Alaska 99615
(907) 486-3105

Kotzebue Job Service
Box 295
Kotzebue, Alaska 99752
(907) 442-3280

Mat-Su Employment Center
(1½ Mile Knik Road)
Pouch Z
Wasilla, Alaska 99687
(907) 376-2407

Nome Job Service
(Front Street)
Box 161
Nome, Alaska 99762
(907) 443-2626

Petersburg Job Service
(414 Main Street)
Box 389
Petersburg, Alaska 99833
(907) 772-3791

Seward Employment Center
(Municipal Bldg., Room 203)
Box 875
Seward, Alaska 99664
(907) 224-5276

Sitka Employment Center
(304 Lake Street)
Box 1189
Sitka, Alaska 99835
(907) 747-3347

Tok Job Service
(Second Street)
Box 439
Tok, Alaska 99780
(907) 883-5629

Unalaska-Dutch Harbor Job Service
Box 554
Dutch Harbor, Alaska 99692
(907) 581-1580

ALASKA

By Ed Eboch

Alaska has experienced the best and worst of employment the past twelve months with record levels of employment and record levels of unemployment. Nonagricultural wage and salary employment in January and February was the highest ever as was January's revised 13.2% and February's preliminary 13.1% unemployment rates. January's number set an unemployment rate record for the state. While employment improved slightly in February the increase was not sufficient to dramatically reduce the ranks of the unemployed.

Causes of Unemployment

Total unemployment is a function of economic conditions and policy action. The causes of unemployment fall into four broad categories with elements of each found in any jobless situation. The most commonly recognized and probably the most important for the U.S. as a whole is cyclical unemployment. This is unemployment associated with the ups and downs of the business cycle. Alaska has been fortunate that it was not significantly impacted by the recent business downturn. Except for the forestry products industry, the only industries showing some weakness were mining and tourism. Even within the forest industry logging employment has remained reasonably strong. Since the recent worldwide recession placed little downward pressure on Alaska's employment the recovery will be unlikely to have a significant upward impact.

The second cause of unemployment is unemployment related to fluctuations that occur during the year. This is referred to as seasonal unemployment and is probably the most widespread form of unemployment in Alaska. It explains the large swings over the year and between communities at any one time. With the exception of government all of Alaska's basic industries have a strong seasonal variation in employment. Mining, manufacturing (fish and forest processing) and tourism have sharp swings in employment related to the seasons as does construction. These swings affect support industries which also adjust their employment levels to the seasonal changes of the basic industries.

The current high unemployment rate is probably associated with record levels of employment in the construction industry. There is evidence that construction workers remained in state after a strong construction season that lasted late into the year and already shows signs of picking up. The cost of the job search, the cost of a move, and lower wage expectations discouraged construction workers from looking outside Alaska for work for the anticipated short layoff period. In addition, unemployment in the construction industry nationwide exceeded 15% in February, which means jobs are scarce throughout the U.S. in construction.

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
ALASKA

	P/	R/	CHANGES FROM:		
	2/84	1/84	2/83	1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	202200	199500	192900	2700	9300
Mining	8200	8100	8300	100	-100
Construction	15000	15000	14300	0	700
Manufacturing	7200	6700	7600	500	-400
Food & Kindred Prod.	2800	2300	3100	500	-300
Lumber & Paper Prod.	1700	1700	1800	0	-100
All Other Mfg.	2700	2700	2700	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	17300	17300	17200	0	100
Trucking & Whseing.	2100	2100	2200	0	-100
Water Transportation	1200	1200	1000	0	200
Air Transportation	5400	5400	5100	0	300
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	8600	8600	8900	0	-300
Trade	42200	42500	37400	-300	4800
Wholesale	7900	8000	7400	-100	500
Retail	34300	34500	30000	-200	4300
General Merchandise & Apparel	4800	5000	4300	-200	500
Food Stores	5900	5900	4900	0	1000
Eating & Drinking Places	11600	11200	10400	400	1200
Other Retail Trade	12000	12400	10400	-400	1600
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	10600	10600	9800	0	800
Services & Misc.	37900	37200	37300	700	600
Government	63800	62100	61000	1700	2800
Federal	17600	17300	17300	300	300
State	19300	18200	19000	1100	300
Local	26900	26600	24700	300	2200

Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Government includes teachers in primary and secondary schools, and personnel employed by the University of Alaska.

Benchmark Date March 1983.

P/ Denotes premilinary estimates.

R/ Denotes revised estimates.

A third cause of unemployment is referred to as frictional unemployment. This is a temporary situation caused by the difficulties of matching available workers with available jobs. Contrary to past immigration patterns new employees are arriving with their families. Where the spouse enters the work force it takes time to adjust their skills with the needs of the market. This an ongoing problem.

The final cause of unemployment arises from basic changes in the composition of labor demand and the failure of the labor supply to accommodate new market conditions. This is referred to as structural unemployment. We may be seeing signs of this in the forest products industry as round logs, off private lands, begin to supplant processed timber, off state and federal lands, in the Japanese market. In addition, low oil prices make petrochemical products competitive with the synthetic materials produced from Alaska pulp. Weaker markets and reduced output for pulp results in less employment in the pulp and paper sectors.

Construction Employment

Historically construction employment in the U.S. has averaged about 5% of total nonagricultural employment. In Alaska the average has been closer to 7% ranging from 6.2% in 1980 to a high of 17.8% in 1976. Beginning with the 1982 construction season, as a percent of total nonagricultural employment, construction employment began to surge reaching 8.4% in 1982 and 9.5% last year. Alaska's resource based economy and the expansion of an underdeveloped infrastructure contribute to the higher percent of employment in construction relative to the U.S. in general. There is still a need for expanded infrastructure facilities and strong state expenditures will keep construction employment up in these areas. Speculation in residential and commercial building contributed to the latest surge in construction. The 1983 figures were also pushed upward by activities on the North Slope.

If the current list of planned private projects and anticipated state funded projects occur as scheduled, 1984 should still be a good year for Alaska's construction industry. Early indications are that construction employment will be greater than normal but below the record levels of 1983. With less activity on the North Slope and a surplus of residential housing and commercial office space some areas of weakness will be apparent. One common feature of construction booms is that they are followed with lower than average levels of construction employment as demand for the completed projects catches up with the oversupply. While its unlikely that the levels of 1983 will be reached no major downturn in construction employment is expected for 1984. Should 1984 activities moderate to more normal levels Alaska may avoid the "bust" in construction employment that would normally follow an overbuilding period.

LABOR FORCE BY REGION AND CENSUS DIVISION

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83
Alaska Statewide	225944	220141	212230	29524	29051	27463	13.1	13.2	12.9	196420	191090	184767
Anchorage-Matsu Region	118692	116057	109813	11865	11334	10979	10.0	9.8	10.0	106827	104723	98834
Anchorage	106488	104150	98568	9561	9132	8893	9.0	8.8	9.0	96927	95018	89675
Matanuska-Susitna	12204	11907	11245	2304	2202	2086	18.9	18.5	18.6	9900	9705	9159
Gulf Coast Region	24289	23367	23008	4427	4271	4257	18.2	18.3	18.5	19862	19096	18751
Cordova	1243	1225	1178	180	203	174	14.5	16.6	14.8	1063	1022	1004
Kenai	12653	12188	12003	2533	2458	2449	20.0	20.2	20.4	10120	9730	9554
Kodiak	5258	5055	5010	723	695	728	13.8	13.7	14.5	4535	4360	4282
Seward	1835	1718	1715	419	356	378	22.8	20.7	22.0	1416	1362	1337
Valdez	3300	3181	3102	572	559	528	17.3	17.6	17.0	2728	2622	2574
Interior Region	30610	29805	28495	5736	5766	4995	18.7	19.3	17.5	24874	24039	23500
Fairbanks	24989	24366	23177	4716	4772	4022	18.9	19.6	17.4	20273	19594	19155
Southeast Fairbanks	2440	2350	2230	406	385	309	16.6	16.4	13.9	2034	1965	1921
Upper Yukon	737	728	717	130	142	144	17.6	19.5	20.1	607	586	573
Yukon-Koyukuk	2444	2361	2371	484	467	520	19.8	19.8	21.9	1960	1894	1851
Northern Region	11040	10461	10677	1219	1088	889	11.0	10.4	8.3	9821	9373	9788
Barrow-North Slope	2930	2818	2805	281	290	165	9.6	10.3	5.9	2649	2528	2640
Kobuk	3450	3260	3348	402	351	310	11.7	10.8	9.3	3048	2909	3038
Nome	4660	4383	4524	536	447	414	11.5	10.2	9.2	4124	3936	4110
Southeast Region	30493	30068	29605	5013	5350	5190	16.4	17.8	17.5	25480	24718	24415
Angoon	384	376	409	47	49	86	12.2	13.0	21.0	337	327	323
Haines	1057	1052	1068	197	218	244	18.6	20.7	22.8	860	834	824
Juneau	10559	10362	10044	1309	1390	1182	12.4	13.4	11.8	9250	8972	8862
Ketchikan	6541	6400	6301	1181	1200	1165	18.1	18.8	18.5	5360	5200	5136
Outer Ketchikan	769	797	892	138	184	287	17.9	23.1	32.2	631	613	605
Prince of Wales	1474	1453	1526	295	309	396	20.0	21.3	26.0	1179	1144	1130
Sitka	4221	4194	4058	484	569	477	11.5	13.6	11.8	3737	3625	3581
Skagway	1762	1726	1719	517	517	525	29.3	30.0	30.5	1246	1209	1194
Wrangell-Petersburg	3725	3708	3588	845	914	828	22.7	24.6	23.1	2880	2794	2760
Southwest Region	10820	10383	10632	1264	1242	1153	11.7	12.0	10.8	9556	9141	9479
Aleutian Islands	2729	2643	2752	130	157	174	4.8	5.9	6.3	2599	2486	2578
Bethel	3472	3331	3402	432	422	387	12.4	12.7	11.4	3040	2908	3015
Bristol Bay Borough	392	370	394	49	42	54	12.5	11.4	13.7	343	328	340
Bristol Bay	1480	1405	1427	197	177	154	13.3	12.6	10.8	1283	1228	1273
Kuskokwim	1083	977	954	204	184	132	19.7	18.8	13.8	829	793	822
Wade Hampton	1714	1657	1703	252	259	252	14.7	15.6	14.8	1462	1398	1451

P/=Preliminary 1983 Benchmark

R/=Revised

Federal guidelines require the use of unrounded labor data, adjusted to be consistent with the Current Population Survey (CPS) in formulas used to allocate federal funds. Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series published by the Alaska Department of Labor; because Alaska's CPS sample size is inadequate to accurately indicate monthly changes in level. The sampling errors are random in nature; meaning that the unemployment rates, in any given month, are as likely to be high as frequently as they are low. The official definitions of unemployment, currently in place, exclude anyone who has made no attempt to find work in the four week period up to and including the week that includes the twelfth of each month. Most economists feel that Alaska's bush localities have proportionately more of these discouraged workers.

Other Industries

With the dismal crab season affecting even the tanner crab harvest employment in seafood processing was the lowest for February since 1975. Employment levels are anticipated to average below last year's even through the peak salmon runs of summer. The prolonged slump in the forest products industry is beginning to affect the general economics and employment of the communities where the forest processing plants are located. Only time will tell whether this is a structural change or a temporary downturn due to the weak U.S. and Japanese market for timber products. With the improved worldwide economic outlook and a clearer picture of oil supply, demand, and prices the fate of the Alaska forest products industry should be resolved.

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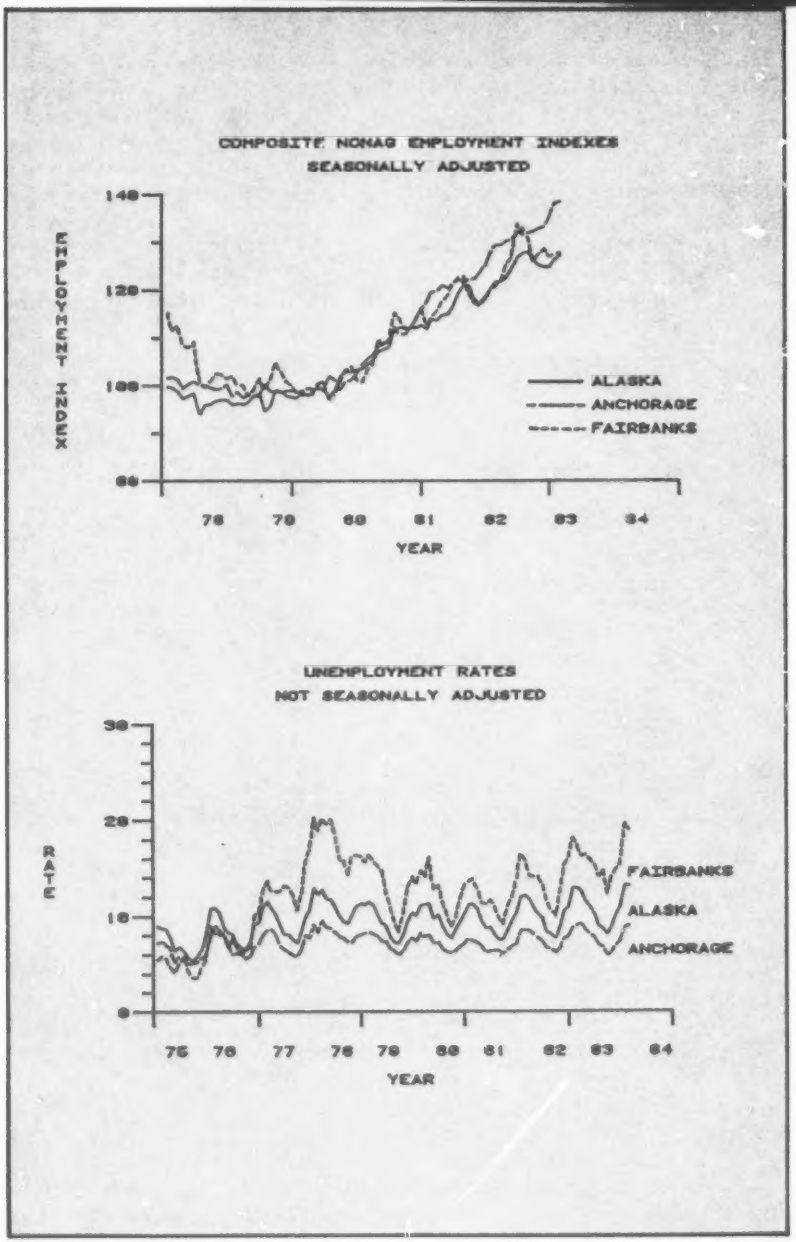

ANCHORAGE-MATSU

By Greg Huff

Nonagricultural wage and salary employmnent in the Anchorage and MatSu areas bucked the seasona! declines of the past several months, increasing slightly over January levels. In Anchorage, community college employees going back to work after the Christmas break accounted for the major portion of the employment increase in February. Employment levels in the wholesale and retail trade sector have yet to recover from post-Christmas layoffs and construction employment is down as a result of seasonal declines in construction activity. Construction employment declined by 200 in February, but much less than the 1,000 job decline in January.

Although employment grew slightly in February the number of people unemployed, increased at a faster pace than employment, forcing the region's unemployment rate up to 10.0%, with MatSu's rate of 18.9% over twice the 9.0% Anchorage rate. It is not uncommon for the unemployment rate to increase when employment increases due to construction related layoffs and the influx of unemployed persons into the region.

Anchorage Consumer Price Index

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has released the 1983 annual average Anchorage Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U). According to the Anchorage Consumer Price Index 1983 average annual prices in Anchorage registered their smallest gain since 1965. Stable shelter costs and slight decreases in energy cost were responsible for the nominal 1.8% increase in the local index.

It is important to note that comparison of the 1983 index may not reflect actual changes in cost of living in Anchorage. Prior to 1983 the Anchorage All Items Index has been biased downward by housing data used to calculate homeownership costs. Traditionally, the BLS has calculated the change in the cost of homeownership as a weighed average of the interest rate on mortgages (as reported by the Federal Home Loan Board) and the sales price of housing with Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgages. The problem was that Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) financed almost all house sales in Anchorage and the BLS did not include AHFC mortgage lending information in its survey. Lacking sufficient sample in Anchorage, BLS substituted out-of-state data.

Table 1
Anchorage CPI-U
Annual Average
1983

	Index	Percent Change
All Items	264.8	1.8
Food and Beverage	291.2	2.6
Food at home	259.6	1.9
Food away from home	286.9	3.4
Housing	261.4	0.9
Apparel and upkeep	201.8	5.2
Transportation	269.2	1.7
Medical Care	259.2	5.1
Entertainment	259.7	6.3
Other Goods and Services	255.8	8.9
Special Index		
All Items less shelter	281.8	3.7

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics *NEWS*.

In January 1983 the BLS began using a new method called rental equivalency in lieu of interest rates and home purchase prices to measure the movement of homeownership cost. In other words, the BLS began estimating homeownership costs on the basis of what it cost to rent similar houses. This method has solved the problem caused by the exclusion of AHFC-financed houses from the survey. Although the methodology change was introduced in January 1983, the price changes from 1982 to 1983 are calculated using the old methodology. With the methodology change the 1983-1984 comparisons will be an improved measure of the changing prices in the Anchorage area.

Given the problems with the Housing data in the Anchorage Consumer Price All Items Index, a better indicator of the average price from 1982 to 1983 may be the Special Index, All Items Less Shelter. With the shelter costs excluded the Anchorage CPI increased 3.7%. Even this may understate the actual changes in the cost of living. Using the new methodology adopted by the BLS, the Housing Index for Anchorage rose 6.8% from January 1983 to January 1984. Because of the weight of the Housing Index in the All Items Index this suggests average price increases probably exceeded both the 1.8% presented by the BLS release and the 3.7% of the Special Index.

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
ANCHORAGE

	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83	CHANGES FROM: 1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	103350	103150	96300	200	7050
Mining	3550	3550	3450	0	100
Construction	7550	7750	7050	-200	500
Manufacturing	2050	2100	2000	-50	50
Food & Kindred Prod.	300	300	300	0	0
All Other Mfg.	1750	1800	1700	-50	50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	8650	8550	8050	100	600
Trucking & Whseing.	1350	1300	1200	50	150
Water Transportation	250	250	200	0	50
Air Transportation	3450	3500	3200	-50	250
Other Trans. Comm & Utilities	3600	3500	3450	100	150
Trade	26100	26350	23300	-250	2800
Wholesale	5950	6050	5650	-100	300
Retail	20150	20300	17650	-150	2500
General Merchandise	1750	1850	1600	-100	150
Food Stores	2600	2600	2300	0	300
Eating & Drinking Places	7650	7600	6700	50	950
Other Retail Trade	8150	8250	7050	-100	1100
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	7050	7000	6650	50	400
Services & Misc.	22850	22750	22150	100	700
Government	25550	25100	23650	450	1900
Federal	10050	9950	9850	100	200
State	6550	6100	6550	450	0
Local	8950	9050	7250	-100	1700

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
ANCHORAGE-MATSU

	P 2/84	R 1/84	2/83	CHANGES FROM: 1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	108600	108250	100700	350	7900
Mining	3600	3550	3500	50	100
Construction	7900	8100	7450	-200	450
Manufacturing	2100	2150	2050	-50	50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	9150	9100	8550	50	600
Trade	27200	27450	24250	-250	2950
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	7300	7300	6850	0	450
Services & Misc.	24000	23750	22800	250	1200
Government	27350	26850	25250	500	2100

FAIRBANKS/INTERIOR

By Neal Fried

Unemployment

No surprises were expected so early in the year, but Fairbanks' high unemployment rates for January and February did provide some material for surprise. January's rate of 19.6% and February's rate of 18.9% were among the highest in the state and a point or two above year-ago levels; all in spite of a growing local economy.

The culprit is largely seasonality, with a slightly new twist this year. It appears construction employees worked longer into this winter season than normal, and the layoffs came "all at once" in January. More workers may also have chosen to remain in Fairbanks after the late winter layoffs, since the beginning of the spring season startup is not far away, and they are expecting another good year. In addition, laid-off North Slope workers may have contributed to the high unemployment rates. Fairbanks supplies most of the North Slope's construction labor force. When workers lose their jobs many return home to Fairbanks and collect unemployment insurance there. What this boils down to is that there are more construction workers now than there have been in many years.

Employment

Despite these high rates of unemployment, employment numbers in 1984 continue to register at levels far above 1983. The nonagricultural wage and salary composite index series, which purges seasonality, continues to move up. February's index number of 127.8 is a full 7 points above the year ago figure. Trade employment is down slightly for the month but up significantly from last year. Services and finance, insurance and real estate employment is also above year ago numbers. The one industry which has experienced some setback is transportation, communication and utilities. Transportation has suffered some losses in trucking and Alascom's cutbacks are still being felt in communications.

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
FAIRBANKS

	P	R	CHANGES FROM:		
	2/84	1/84	2/83	1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	25300	24900	23800	400	1500
Mining	200	200	300	0	-100
Construction	1750	1700	1600	50	150
Manufacturing	450	450	450	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2550	2600	2600	-50	-50
Trucking & Whseing.	350	400	400	-50	-50
Air Transportation	600	600	550	0	50
Other Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1600	1600	1650	0	-50
Trade	5350	5450	4650	-100	700
Wholesale	900	900	850	0	50
Retail	4450	4550	3800	-100	650
Gen. Merchandise & Apparel	400	450	350	-50	50
Food Stores	750	750	650	0	100
Other Retail Trade	3300	3350	2800	-50	500
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	950	950	900	0	50
Services & Misc.	4900	4850	4700	50	200
Government	9150	8700	8600	450	550
Federal	2550	2500	2500	50	50
State	3950	3600	3850	350	100
Local	2650	2600	2250	50	400

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
INTERIOR

	P	R	CHANGES FROM:		
	2/84	1/84	2/83	1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	28700	28100	27150	600	1550
Mining	300	300	400	0	-100
Construction	1850	1800	1600	50	250
Manufacturing	500	500	450	0	50
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	3250	3250	3350	0	-100
Trade	5650	5700	5050	-50	600
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	1000	1000	950	0	50
Services & Misc.	5150	5100	4950	50	200
Government	11000	10450	10400	550	600

GULF COAST

By Neal Fried

Valdez 1980-1983

The Department of Labor does not produce a wage and salary or labor force statistical series specifically for the City of Valdez. Instead it produces these numbers for the larger Valdez-Chitina-Whittier census division. This division includes a number of communities outside of Valdez including Glennallen, Gulkana, Whittier, Gakona as well as number of other smaller communities. The community of Valdez, with more than 50% of the census divisions's total employment sets the pace for this area.

Valdez's recent economic history has differed from most of Alaska's communities. During the past 3 years many of Alaska's communities have benefited from state funded construction activities. Their economies have been stimulated from record state expenditures and construction employment reached new highs in many of these communities in 1983. Many of the projects these communities have undertaken are attempts to permanently expand their economic base.

Valdez has already gone through much of this phase. With the completion of the oil pipeline in 1977, Valdez was left with a dramatically larger tax base generated by the oil pipeline terminus. This expanded tax base gave Valdez the opportunity to work on a number of large projects before most other communities in the state could do so. Whereas most of these projects in other communities had to wait for state funding, which was not forthcoming until 1981 or later, Valdez was able to strike out on its own at an earlier date.

Projects which Valdez has undertaken include a large Civic Auditorium used for local events and conventions, a container terminal and floating dock, a grain terminal for Delta's grain harvests, and a variety of other smaller projects. Valdez hopes these projects will help diversify its economy, and steer it away from being so dependent upon oil. Time will be the judge of the success of diversification.

Two private sector projects which are planned for this year will compliment Valdez's efforts in expanding and diversifying its economic base. Ground for a new $10 million hotel is expected to be broken this spring. This will allow Valdez to host larger conventions and will also boost its capacity for a growing tourist sector. A new fish processing plant is also being planned, bringing the total number of plants to 3.

Employment

Valdez's wage and salary employment has remained largely stable during the past 3 years. The real spurt of growth took place between 1978-1981, when employment grew by 23%. Construction dipped in 1983 because of the completion of the Civic Auditorium, port facility, and a slower residential construction year. Transportation employment also came down as a result of Alyeska's recent trimming of its work force. Trade has remained strong, partially as a result of a good tourist season. Most other sectors remained stable.

Valdez-Chitina-Whittier
Nonagricultural Employment
1980-1983

	1980	1981	1982	1983 1/
Total Nonagricultural Employment	2,381	2,510	2,537	2,378
Mining	•	•	•	•
Construction	290	268	242	186
Manufacturing	•	•	•	•
Transportation	506	544	556	498
Trade	189	236	260	265
Wholesale	30	38	40	40
Retail	159	198	220	225
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	74	52	48	47
Services	469	391	433	408
Government	839	872	897	889
Federal	40	35	36	32
State	412	415	411	409
Local	396	422	450	448

• Nondisclosable

1/ Fourth quarter has been estimated.

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
GULF COAST

	P	R	CHANGES FROM:		
	2/84	1/84	2/83	1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	17100	16800	16200	300	900
Mining	700	700	700	0	0
Construction	1300	1300	1150	0	150
Manufacturing	1700	1550	1850	150	-150
Food & Kindred Prod.	1100	900	1250	200	-150
All Other Mfg.	600	650	600	-50	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	2250	2200	2050	50	200
Trade	2900	2900	2500	0	400
Wholesale	400	400	350	0	50
Retail	2500	2500	2150	0	350
Finance-Ins. & R. Estate	450	450	450	0	0
Services & Misc.	2800	2800	2600	0	200
Government	5000	4900	4900	100	100
Federal	500	500	500	0	0
State	1450	1400	1450	50	0
Local	3050	3000	2950	50	100

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

By John Boucher

Southeast Alaska nonagricultural wage and salary employment increased by 350 jobs in February to 26,050. The increase represented 1.4% growth in employment over January's level. Compared to one year ago, Southeast Alaska's employment has increased 3.6%.

Increases in Southeast employment in February were spread across all industries. With the exception of retail trade, every industry either increased the number of persons working or held steady at January's level. This is an indication that Southeast Alaska has passed its seasonal low and is beginning the spring turnaround.

Government employment was the largest single contributor to growth in February, providing 200 more jobs than in January. State government employment was boosted by the beginning of the second semester on the campuses of the University of Alaska. Local government employment increased due to a combination of growth in both education and non-education related government employment. Transportation, communication and public utilities was another contributor to employment growth over the month. Increased activity in the water transportation sector was largely responsible for the upward movement in this industry. Construc-

NONAGRICULTURAL WAGE AND SALARY EMPLOYMENT
BY PLACE OF WORK
SOUTHEAST ALASKA

	P	R	CHANGES FROM:		
	2/84	1/84	2/83	1/84	2/83
Nonag. Wage & Salary	26050	25700	25150	350	900
Construction	1300	1250	1250	50	50
Manufacturing	1900	1850	2050	50	-150
Food & Kindred Prod.	350	350	400	0	-50
Lumber & Paper Prod.	1350	1300	1450	50	-100
All Other Mfg.	200	200	200	0	0
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	1900	1800	1800	100	100
Trade	4250	4350	3950	-100	300
Wholesale	400	400	350	0	50
Retail	3850	3950	3600	-100	250
Finance, Ins. & R. Estate	1000	1000	900	0	100
Mining, Services & Misc.	4050	4000	3850	50	200
Government	11650	11450	11350	200	300
Federal	2050	2050	1950	0	100
State	5450	5350	5500	100	-50
Local	4150	4050	3900	100	250

tion, manufacturing and services all made small contributions to employment growth in the region but these had significant impact only when considered cumulatively rather than as individual industries. On the down side, retail trade employment dropped as activity decreased in food store employment and general retail trade activity. This was due to layoffs following the holiday buying season.

Wrangell Mill Closing

Headlines of the past several months have not been encouraging for the wood products industry. There seems to be a concensus that the industry is in its worst shape in 30 years. The Wrangell mill closure in February is another sign that this industry is facing tough times. Yet our *Alaska Economic Trends* estimate for the wood products industry shows a net gain in employment in that industry in February. Is all the talk about the industry a smokescreen or is something else effecting the employment numbers? In this case, our numbers for February might be considered misleading. The survey from which we estimate employment is dependent upon employment as of the week that includes the 12th day of the month. In this case, the Wrangell Mill had not shut down during the week of February 12th. Therefore, their employees are included in the employment numbers for the month of February. Last month, the opposite situation occurred with the University of Alaska. With the late start for the second semester many university employees started working after the survey week and therefore were not included in January's totals. Users of data published in *Alaska Economic Trends* should be aware that statistics of this type have their limitations and that good analysis is dependent upon knowing the limitations of the statistics you're working with.

HOURS AND EARNINGS

By John Boucher

Alaska average hours and earnings for the month of January remained relatively stable when compared to December levels. Average hours and average weekly earnings were both down slightly in trade as retailers returned to normal business hours after the holiday season. Average hours and earnings and weekly earnings in Alaskas lumber and paper products industry declined by 7% and 2%, respectively, largely due to decreasing employment in Southeast Alaska logging.

The food and kindred products sector of the manufacturing industry was a pleasant surprise in January posting gains in all three categories of the survey. Although crab openings have not been very fruitful, it looks to be an improvement over the total closures of late 1983. Increasing activity in the bottomfish area could also be helping to shore up the totals in this industry.

The construction industry increased average weekly hours by 5.7% over December, a sign that activity in that industry is picking up after the holiday sabbatical. It is interesting to note that all three categories of hours and earnings are down slightly in the construction industry when compared to the year ago totals. Although January is not a month that would tip off the direction this years construction season will take when compared to 1983, future hours and earnings data will be useful in comparing the coming construction season to the record construction of 1983.

ALASKA
HOURS AND EARNINGS
FOR
SELECTED INDUSTRIES 1 2

	Average Hourly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Weekly Earnings		
	p 1 84	r 12 83	1 83	p 1 84	r 12 83	1 83	p 1 84	r 12 83	1 83
Mining	$21.19	$22.88	$23.02	49.8	46.0	49.8	$1055.26	$1052.48	$1146.10
Contract Construction	23.61	24.01	23.62	40.7	38.5	40.9	960.93	924.39	966.06
Manufacturing	15.77	14.79	14.70	33.1	33.2	30.2	521.99	491.03	443.94
Food & Kindred Products	9.00	8.60	9.04	22.2	21.6	17.6	199.80	185.76	159.10
Lumber & Paper Products	19.63	18.51	17.32	37.1	40.1	37.8	728.27	742.25	654.70
Trans. Comm. & Utilities	15.82	15.99	14.98	37.1	36.6	38.3	586.92	585.23	573.73
Trade	10.56	10.13	9.75	33.8	35.5	34.3	356.93	359.62	334.13
Wholesale	12.59	12.31	11.13	36.9	37.5	37.1	464.57	462.75	412.92
Retail	9.76	9.33	9.19	32.8	34.8	33.1	320.13	324.68	306.95
Fin.-Ins. & Real Estate	—	—	—	—	—	—	355.11	357.40	372.78

1 Prepared in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor

2 Excludes eating and drinking establishments

AVERAGE HOURS AND EARNINGS SERIES: Averages are based on data for full and part time production workers (manufacturing) and nonsupervisory workers (nonmanufacturing) and are for gross earnings and hours paid, including overtime pay and hours.